



Book 1 of 3

What?

The Co-Design Process



The Co-Design Project

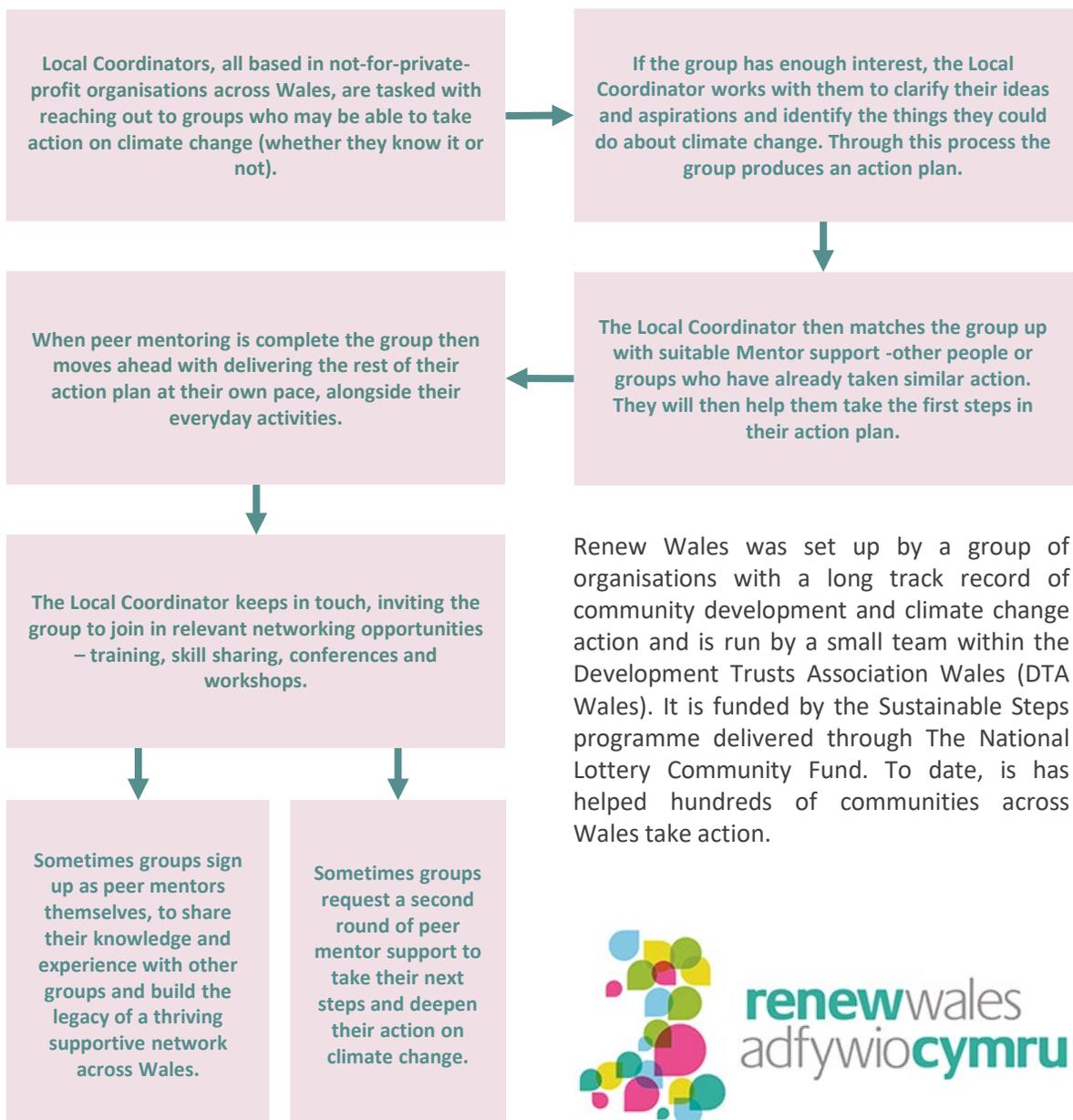
Final Report

November 2021

Preface: What is Renew Wales?

Renew Wales is a practitioner-led programme, set up in 2012, which helps communities in Wales reduce their carbon footprint, adapt to the impacts of climate change and live more sustainably.

The programme assumes that Community Groups will engage with and learn best from those who have travelled the same road and delivers its mission through a unique peer-to-peer process.



Renew Wales was set up by a group of organisations with a long track record of community development and climate change action and is run by a small team within the Development Trusts Association Wales (DTA Wales). It is funded by the Sustainable Steps programme delivered through The National Lottery Community Fund. To date, it has helped hundreds of communities across Wales take action.



Introduction

In Book 1 of this report, we ask ‘what?’, and detail the co-design process itself: what it was, where it came from, and how it was utilised to explore the questions and ideas which were central to our project.

In one sense, the Co-Design Project was very simple. It was a three stage process of thinking about the past, before trying out some new things, and then bringing it all together and thinking about the future.

In another sense however, the project was nuanced and complex. It comprised elements of research, reflection, evaluation, action-learning and experimentation. It brought together those who knew Renew Wales and those who didn’t, and work commenced with the project’s outputs not only unknown, but unknowable. Ultimately, the Co-Design Project’s central thesis was that we could prepare better for the future by sharing responsibility and working together, than we could be remaining detached and working in isolation.

There was a plan, but not certainty. From the outset, broad phases of work were defined, but not specific actions. Every design decision was made together, with all those who identified as stakeholders in Renew Wales’ mission, and every part of the project was informed by that which proceeded it. As such, the project had to be flexible, responsive and capable of adapting to challenges and taking opportunities. All were invited to participate, and no one was obliged to. The actions undertaken were everyone’s actions, and the conclusions drawn here are everyone’s conclusions.

In the following pages, we detail:

- What co-design means.
- The origin of this co-design project.
- The key outputs the co-design project delivered.
- The core components of each of the three phases of project delivery.

In Book 2 of this Final Report, we detail what this co-design process revealed regarding the impacts of the Renew Wales programme to date, and in Book 3, how it has informed the ways in which the programme’s mission may be most effectively advanced in the future.

The Co-Design Project was led, and this Final Report produced by, the Co-production Network for Wales. As a participatory, developmental project, learning was generated, and embedded, through the project’s delivery, captured through a diverse range of outputs (an archive of which accompanies this Final Report). This Final Report does not replace the learning captured elsewhere but provides an overarching account of how the diverse elements of the project came together, and the ‘mission-wide’ conclusions which can be drawn as a result of it.

What is Co-Design?



“Co-design is a design-led process that uses creative participatory methods. There is no one-size-fits-all approach nor a set of check-lists to follow. Instead, there are a series of patterns and principles that can be applied in different ways with different people. Co-designers make decisions, not just suggestions.”

Co-design sees the design decisions forming part of any given service or project made *with*, not *for*, the people those decisions will ultimately impact upon. It is part of a broader family of ‘co-production approaches’, where power and responsibility are shared between those delivering, and those receiving services, in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships, characterised by five core values:

1. Building on everyone’s strengths.
2. Developing networks across silos.
3. Focusing on people’s lives, not systems.
4. Working on the basis of great relationships.
5. Enabling people to be change makers.

In the Welsh legislative context, co-production (and co-design by proxy) can be thought of as broadly synonymous with the ‘involvement principle’ of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Co-design (and co-production more broadly) offers greatest value when applied to complex challenges and wicked problems. That is, to those problems where there are no known (or knowable) solutions at the outset, where there are no definitive ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, and where every action changes the parameters of the problem, and what happens next. You can’t know exactly how the co-design process will unfold when you begin, with innovation, learning, and the embracing of emergent outcomes essential.

Furthermore, co-design empowers, democratises, strengthens relationships and builds communities. It gives a voice to those who may not have had one before. A co-design process therefore is not only a means to an end but should equally be respected as an end in itself.

What was the Co-Design Project?

In August 2020, Renew Wales invited proposals in response to its brief for a ‘reflect, connect, design process’.

The brief invited responses from partner organisations who could work with Renew Wales over a 12-month period, ‘to help the broad array of stakeholders and allies across the Renew Wales community reflect on its experience to date, understand where it’s at now, and plan for the decade ahead’, through:

- **Reflecting:** on “what is changing on the ground in the communities where the programme has supported groups?”
- **Connecting:** with conversations across extended networks “about the climate and nature emergencies, about the resilience and vulnerability of their communities, the future they want, the assets they’ve got, the challenges they face and what they can potentially achieve together.”
- **Designing:** to look beyond the past decade of the Renew Wales programme, considering “new ways of supporting community action for a sustainable future from 2021 onwards.”

In response to this brief, the Co-production Network for Wales proposed ‘The Co-Design Project’: an extended co-design exercise, bringing the values of co-production to bear, and involving:

1. The team responsible for delivering the Renew Wales programme over the past decade.
2. The Community Groups who know Renew Wales, and who have benefited from Renew Wales’ support in the past.
3. The groups and organisations who do not know Renew Wales, but who have the potential to benefit from the continuation of Renew Wales’ mission in the future.

The project commenced in September 2020, completing in November 2021. A total of 48 days of support were provided across three broad project phases, ‘Taking Stock’, ‘Reaching Out’ and ‘Planning Ahead’, detailed throughout this book.

The project was led by Co-production Network for Wales consultants Suze Dempsey-Sawin, Jenny Mushiringani Monjero and Mike Corcoran.

The Co-Design Project Team



Suze Dempsey-Sawin



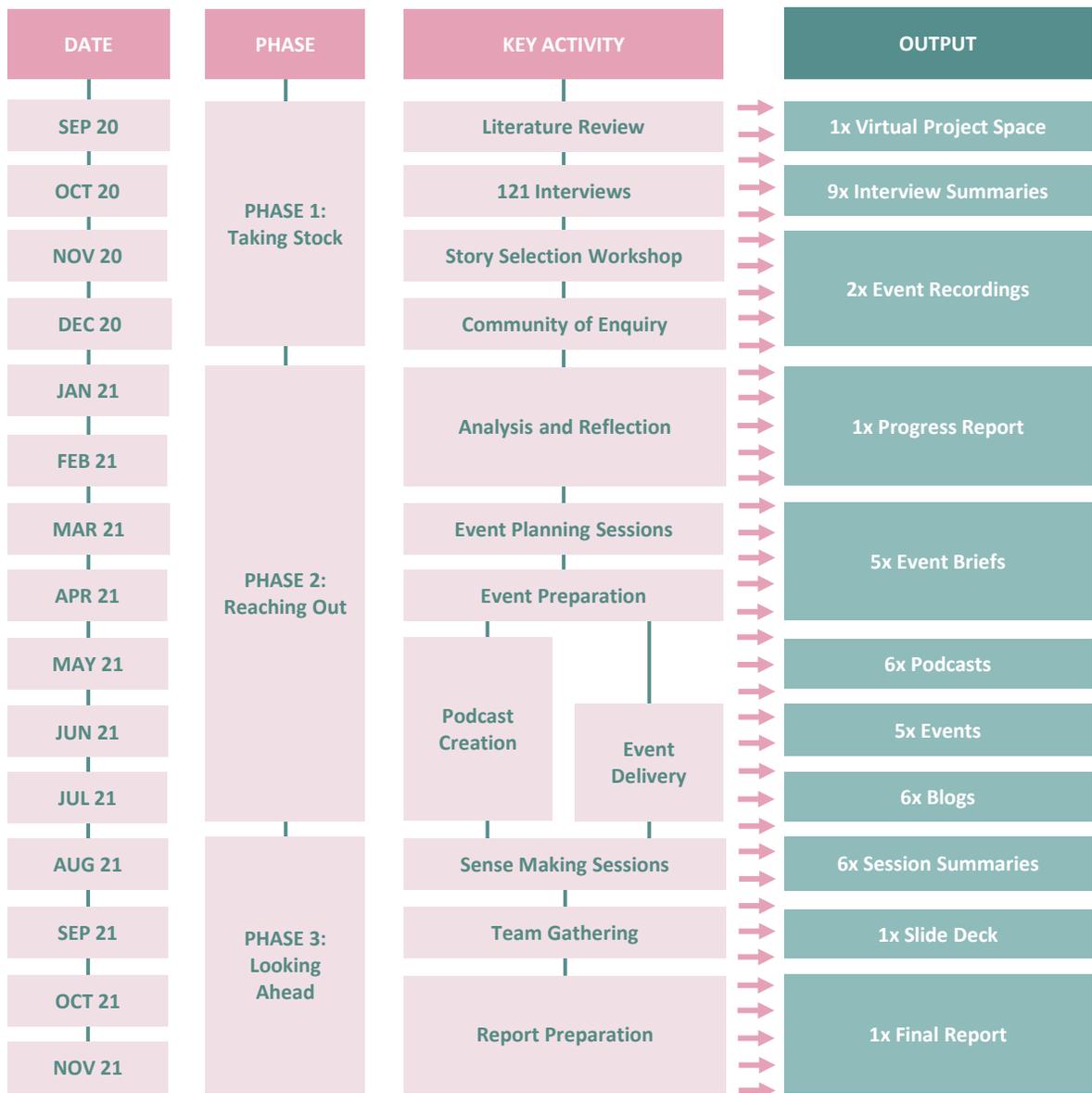
Jenny Mushiringani Monjero



Mike Corcoran

Key Project Outputs

The Co-Design Project comprised three phases of delivery. Each phase included a range of activities, and each its own project outputs. Central to this approach, was an emphasis of action learning, and adapting to challenges and opportunities in real time. Whilst this report is the final project output, it does not supersede those which came before it: each activity and each output had an equal and inherent value.



In total the project involved:

40+ ORGANISATIONS

150+ INDIVIDUALS

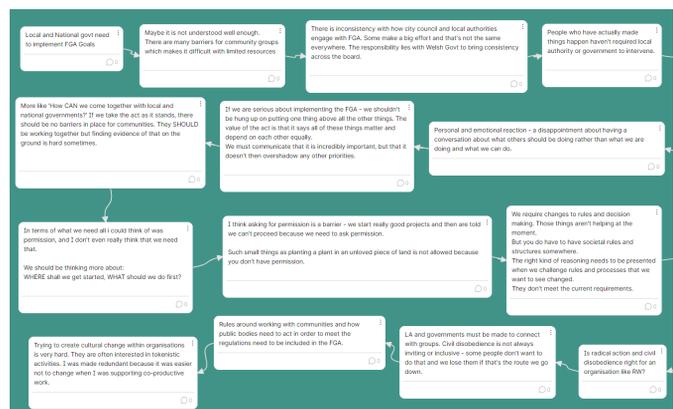
Phase 1: Taking Stock

Phase 1 of the Co-Design project focused on taking stock, consolidating understanding of all that had been achieved by Renew Wales to date, and building a platform, and a strategy, for all which followed:

Phase 1 principally involved:

- **3x Introductory meetings:** Introductory meetings with Renew Wales' Central Team established relationships, and set out management and reporting mechanisms.
- **1x Literature review:** A review of past Renew Wales evaluations, live monitoring and evaluation data, and wider studies aligned with Renew Wales' mission helped to situate and contextualise the impact of programme.
- **9x 121 Interviews:** Interviews conducted with a representative sample of nine Renew Wales' Coordinators, Mentors and Steering Group members, inviting interviewees to share stories of the changes they had experienced for themselves, for communities and for Wales arising from their involvement in the Renew Wales programme.
- **1x Story selection workshop:** Taking stories gathered through 121 interviews as a stimulus, a story selection workshop with Renew Wales' Central Team reflected on which stories were 'most significant' and why.
- **1x Community of Enquiry:** Informed by the story selection workshop, a 'Community of Enquiry' brought together 12x Renew Wales Mentors, Coordinators and Central Team members, to reflect on the 'most significant' stories of change from Renew Wales' past, and to design and discuss future-focused exploratory questions and generating recommendations for action. The Community of Enquiry marked the transition from 'Taking Stock' and reflecting on the past, to 'Reaching Out' and preparing for the future.

To support project delivery of the Co-Design Project, during Phase 1 a dedicated online space was established on Renew Wales' Basecamp site, facilitating communication with Mentors, co-ordinators and wider programme stakeholders, and a digital sticky wall was created using Padlet, allowing any project stakeholder to share feedback, ideas and monitor progress.



Phase 2: Reaching Out

Phase 2 of the Co-Design project concerned reaching out, moving attention towards the future and learning through doing: by having new conversations, with new people, in new ways:

It principally involved:

- **Analysis and reflection:** A period of analysis and reflection on the data gathered, and learning gained, through Phase 1, culminating in the recommendations of the Community of Enquiry being translated into five questions to stimulate planning and discussion.
- **5x Event planning sessions:** Each question defined through analysis and reflection was explored through an ‘event planning session’, to which Renew Wales’ Coordinators, Mentors and Community Groups who had previously been recipients of support were invited. A total of 33 individuals participated in the five sessions, turning each question into a brief for a pilot event. As a full set the briefs:
 - ✓ Provided diversity (of who, what, when, where and why) allowing learning across the events to be optimised.
 - ✓ Ensured each event had an inherent value – making no assumptions about any Renew Wales activity which may or may not follow in the future.
 - ✓ Proposed an event of scale and ambition deliverable to a high standard with the time and resources available.
- **Event preparation:** Following each event brief co-created, preparations for events were undertaken, led by the Co-production Network for Wales, with Renew Wales Mentors and Coordinators providing voluntary support.
- **5x Events:** Events took place in June and July 2021. Over 100 individuals and over 40 organisations and Community Groups participated in events, from all parts of Wales and beyond, including many who had never engaged with Renew Wales previously. Full event details are provided on Page 8.
- **5x Podcasts:** Alongside events, five podcasts were produced by the Renew Wales Central Team, supported by the Co-production Network for Wales. The podcasts supported Phase 2’s agenda by encouraging new conversation (of themes not previously discussed) with new people (with guest contributors from around the world) in new ways (utilising a media new to the programme). Each podcast was hosted by a different Renew Wales Coordinator. A full breakdown of Podcasts is provided on Page 9.

Dedicated Basecamp and Padlet pages continued to be utilised in the delivery of Phase 2, with a progress report documenting progress and learning to date for the Renew Wales Steering Group.

Phase 2: Reaching Out

Phase 2's events were as follows:

EVENT 1: THE TAKEOVER

Event 1 was a response to the question 'How can those who never talk about climate change be brought into the conversation?' It took the form of a takeover, with Renew Wales Mentors and Coordinators joining the meetings of an established network who do not traditionally attend environmentally themed training and events. The group in question were a group of freelancers and small business owners from across the UK, with the event hosted by coworking specialists TownSq. The event was held in the first week June to coincide with World Environment Day and was attended by 12 individuals from a diverse range of sectors.

EVENT 2: THE SPEED DATE

Event 2 (entitled 'All in this together') was a response to the question 'How can informal community-led meet-ups make a positive contribution to our environmental challenges?' The 1-hour event had an open invitation, issued to all those who had previously received the support of Renew Wales, alongside invited guests from around the world. It took the form of a 'speed date' with attendees randomly allocated into groups for 3-rounds of informal discussion. A dedicated Padlet page allowed participants to share contact details and continue their conversations after the event completed. A total of 15 individuals, from 15 different organisations attended.

EVENT 3: THE BRING-AND-BUY SALE

Event 3 (entitled 'Tuning Our Climate Emergency Declarations Into Action') was a response to the question 'How can the 'Climate Emergency' translate into meaningful action at the micro-local level?'. It took the form of a 'reciprocity ring' with a structured discussion allowing each participant to share the things they were looking for the support of the group with, and the support they could offer to the group in return. Invitations were issued to Town and Community Councils from across the UK who had made Climate Emergency Declarations. In total, representatives of 7 Town and Parish councils attended, from across England and Wales.

EVENT 4: THE HACK

Event 4 was a response to the question 'How can Community Groups most effectively access the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to take action?'. It took the form of a 'hack' where a group of people came together to make a set of resources from scratch over the course of a day. Delivered in partnership with People First, Renew Wales Mentors worked alongside artists and 12x individuals with learning disabilities to make a series of posters and short films promoting environmental awareness: in a way which was accessible to all.



EVENT 5: THE CELEBRATION

Event 5 was a response to the question 'How can younger people be inspired to get involved in grassroots, community-led environmental action?' For this event, Renew Wales joined forces with an existing team (led by GwE, Wrexham Glyndwr University and Natural Resources Wales) who were already planning an event with a common agenda. 'TEDxGwE: Countdown to COP26', taking place in November 2021 is an official TEDx event for young speakers from across North Wales. Over 100 young people participated in the event, with over 160 teachers, policy makers and other influencers in attendance.

Taking place against the backdrop of Covid-19, all but Event 4 were delivered entirely online. A detailed account of each event is provided in Book 3.

Phase 2: Reaching Out

Every episode of Phase 2's podcast series 'Renew Wales in Conversation' included one Renew Wales team member, one representative of a group Renew Wales had previously supported, and one individual completely new to the programme.

1: BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN SPACES

Episode 1 explored biodiversity and public green spaces. It featured Jeremy Wadia from Eco Dewi, and Ian Thomas from Welcome to Our Woods. It was hosted by Renew Wales Coordinator Jasmine Dale from Transition Bro Gwaun.



2: TRANSPORT

Episode 2 explored sustainable transport solutions. It features Adam Kennerly from Open Newtown and Sandra Philips, founder of MovMi. It was hosted by Renew Wales Mentor Andrew Burns from Cycle Training Wales.



3: WASTE AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Episode 3 explored waste management and the circular economy. It featured Chloe Masefield from Natural Weigh, Cerys Jones from Repair Café Wales, and was hosted by Renew Wales Coordinator Margaret Minhinick, from Sustainable Wales.



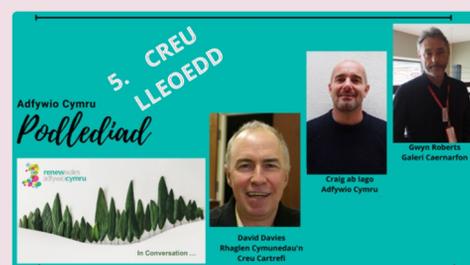
4: CREATIVE ARTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Episode 4 explored the creative arts and climate change. It featured Salome Wagaine from Julia's Bicycle/Season for Change, Geinor Styles from Theatr N'Nog, and was hosted by Renew Wales Mentor Deb Winter from Transition Bro Gwaun.



5: CREU LLEOEDD

Episode 5 'Creu Lleodd' was conducted entirely in the Welsh Language, responding to the identified need of a lack of public climate discussion taking place in the Welsh medium. It featured David Davies, from Rhaglen Cymunedau'n Creu Cartrefi and Gwyn Roberts from Galeri Caernarfon. It was hosted by Renew Wales Coordinator Craig ab Iago from Adfywio Cymru.



Phase 3: Looking Ahead

In Phase 3 of the project, attention turned to the road ahead. Taking the learning gained through the planning, preparation and delivery of events and podcasts as a stimulus, a structured period of reflection considered the potential for engaging with new challenges and opportunities, new audiences and new ways of working in the future.

Phase 3 principally involved:

- **6x Sense Making Sessions:** Every Friday throughout August and early September 2021, lunch time 'sense making sessions' took place. Each session focused on a different Phase 2 event, with an additional session focusing on the Renew Wales podcast series. Taking a short reflective blog summarising the event as a stimulus, the sessions adopted a 'What? So What? Now What?' reflective approach, to establish the significance of each event with regards to the future. Sessions were promoted to Renew Wales Mentors, and Coordinators via Basecamp. A total of seven unique individuals attended the sessions, with an average attendance of four individuals per session.
- **1x Team Gathering:** On 23rd September 2021, the 'Team Gathering' brought together 19 Renew Wales Coordinators and Steering Group Members alongside the three members of the Central Team. The Gathering was broken into two parts:
 1. In part 1, the group reflected on the outcomes of the Co-Design process, and the further changes the group would hope to see, if we were to reconvene 10 years from now.
 2. In part 2, the group reflected on the next steps which can lead towards that vision, on the meaning of 'innovation' and working in small groups, designed 'innovation projects' which could potentially be delivered in the months ahead.
- **Report preparation:** Taking into consideration all activities undertaken, all data gathered, and all learning generated through the full Co-Design Project, materials were prepared from which this Final Report, and its associated appendices, could be produced. As the final output of a co-design exercise, this report does not provide an independent analysis and assessment which is detached from the programme, but rather a top-line authentic account of the co-analysis, and collectively drawn conclusions, of the Renew Wales team, Community Groups and wider programme stakeholders who participated in the project.

Phase 3 commenced in August 2021, culminating in the completion of this report, in November 2021.

What People Said

The following are a selection of quote from those who participated in the Co-Design Project (or some element of it).

From our formal feedback [outside of the Co-design Project], is sounded as if the group hadn't achieved anything. It's potentially an issue with the form, and the limitations of what it can tell you about context.

Great facilitation as always - Diolch!

[We] have achieved so much in 12 months!

I have really enjoyed today and the empowering way in which you have presented the information.

How we can connect more as a community... lots of great ideas and links to websites today, but that excitement will fade without some kind of accountability or additional action

Assessing the impact of the approach has [has traditionally] been challenging - evaluations have never really drawn out understanding of the longer-term impacts of Renew Wales' approach.

Just a great idea to have these types of conversations and hopefully it continues! Helps build confidence in what we are doing and builds more ideas and actions through sharing.

We would never normally hear these kind of stories.

[The most valuable part of the event was] meeting new people and working together for the good of the community.

I hope [events like this] can be happening more often.

Prepared for Renew Wales by
The Co-production Network for Wales



Rhwydwaith
Cydgynhyrchu
Cymru

Co-production
Network
for Wales



Book 2 of 3

So What?

The Impact of Renew Wales



The Co-Design Project

Final Report

November 2021

Introduction

In Book 2 of this report, we ask ‘so, what?’, and reflect on the impacts brought about by the Renew Wales programme to date: what do these impacts really mean, why do they matter, and what do they have to tell us about the future?

Assessing the impact of the Renew Wales programme is not trivial. Its work involves up-stream investment, not only in building skills, knowledge and understanding, but in building networks, relationships and community resilience. As such, the true down-stream impact of its work may only be realised long-after its service has been delivered, and beyond the line of sight of standard monitoring and reporting processes.

Renew Wales has clearly defined KPIs, consistently measures and regularly reports on its progress against its agreed targets, and has been subject to periodic independent evaluations throughout its delivery, most recently in June 2020.

Through the Co-Design Project, we did not attempt to duplicate or challenge these findings. Rather, we took them as our starting point, and looked to build upon, contextualise and learn from them. Through reflection and co-analysis, we sought to capture the ‘unknown unknowns’ of Renew Wales’ impact, the inter-relations between the wide-ranging changes observed and experienced, and co-define the ‘unanswered questions’ to be the subject of exploration and experimentation going forward.

In the following pages, we detail:

- The key outputs the programme has delivered.
- The key outcomes associated with this outputs.
- The stories and experiences of the Renew Wales team.
- The most significant changes the programme has brought about.
- The significant questions these changes raise.

In Book 1 of this Final Report, we detailed the ‘Co-Design’ process through which these impacts and changes were assessed. In Book 3, we turn our gaze to the future, and how an understanding of these impacts and changes can inform the ways in which the programme’s mission may be most effectively advanced in the future.

The Co-Design Project was led, and this Final Report produced by, the Co-production Network for Wales. As a participatory, developmental project, learning was generated, and embedded, through the project’s delivery, captured through a diverse range of outputs (an archive of which accompanies this Final Report). This Final Report does not replace the learning captured elsewhere but provides an overarching account of how the diverse elements of the project came together, and the ‘mission-wide’ conclusions which can be drawn as a result of it.

Key Programme Outputs

The following data (pages 3-6) is derived from the documents ‘Summary Report on KPIs–Q3, 2021’ and ‘Project List and Dashboard (October 2020)’

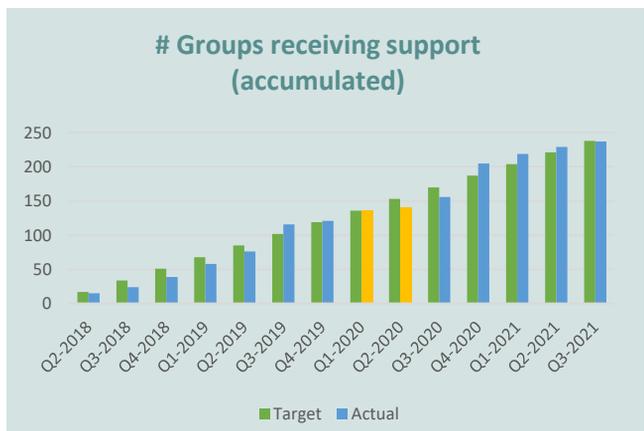
Renew Wales is consistently meeting its delivery targets.

In the period April 2018 – October 2021 Renew Wales has:

- Met with over 382 Community Groups (figure – top right).
- Provided formal peer Mentoring support to over 237 Community Groups (figure – middle right).
- Had over 1,550 individuals participate in its events (figure – bottom right).
- Delivered 9 large-scale projects.
- Delivered 79 national and regional networking and skill sharing events.
- Published over 90 blogs, papers, newsletters and think pieces.
- Participated in 29 workshops, events and other external forums.
- Grown its social media following by over 163%.

The programme is on course (based on current projections) to meet or exceed targets for 92% of its stated key performance indicators for the time period Q2-2018 to Q2–2022.

As indicated by figures to the right (where the gold bars denote the period of the initial Covid-19 breakout and lockdown in the UK) whilst there was a small degree of stagnation with regards to delivery during this period, the programme adapted quickly, with no discernible long-term impact on output overall.



Key Programme Outputs

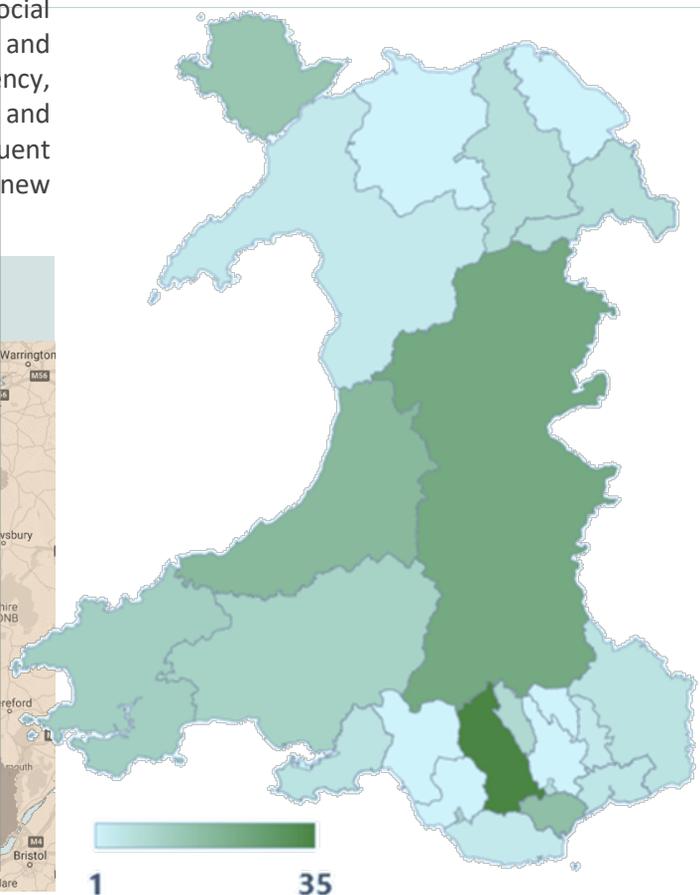
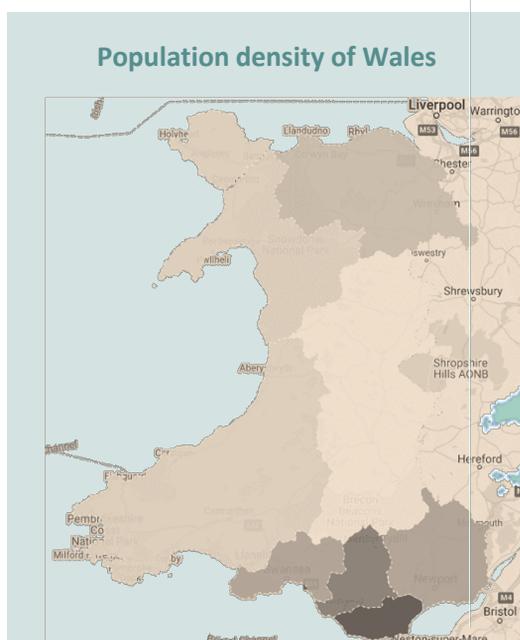
Renew Wales is supporting Community Groups in all parts of Wales, but the distribution of this support is not uniform.

In the period April 2018 – June 2020, every single county in Wales saw at least one local community group supported by Renew Wales. The counties which received the highest levels of support were Rhondda Cynon Taff (where a total of 35 groups were supported), Powys (where 24 groups were supported) and Ceredigion (where 19 groups were supported). Least frequently supported was Conwy County Borough with only a single Community Group supported in the time period.

The geographical distribution of support delivered (figure – bottom right) does not directly map to the population density of the Wales (figure – bottom left). North East and South East Wales received less support per head of the population than the national average, and Mid Wales and Rhondda Cynon Taff, more than average, in the time period.

Most commonly, those groups supported were community centres, social enterprises, schools and town and community councils. Energy efficiency, gardening, renewable energy and governance were the most frequent themes which formed the basis of Renew Wales support.

**Distribution of Renew Wales support
(# groups supported per county borough)**



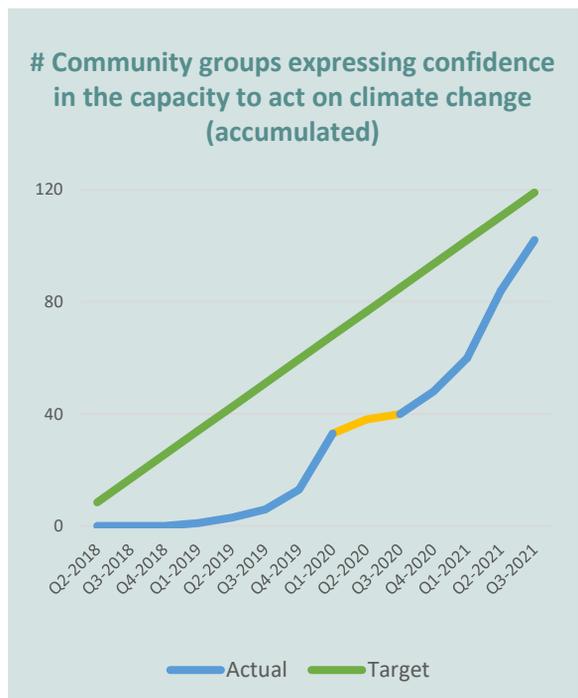
Key Programme Outcomes

Renew Wales is helping Community Groups across Wales to build their confidence, and to take steps towards action on climate change.

With a primary purpose of helping communities in Wales to reduce their carbon footprint, adapt to the impacts of climate change and live more sustainably, the number of groups expressing their confidence to act, and the number subsequently acting, are key performance indicators for Renew Wales.

As demonstrated by the figures below, in the period April 2018 – October 2021, on both counts the programme has become increasingly impactful over time. (Note that the figures indicate when impacts were reported, not necessarily when impacts occurred).

The green line in each figure represents the delivery target with respect to each key performance indicator (if one assumes a linear trajectory towards the overall target). The blue line represents the real numbers derived from Renew Wales monitoring data. These clearly demonstrate that building confidence, and seeing that confidence translated into action, is not a linear process: it takes time. By Q4 – 2019, a significant upshift in progress was observed on both counts. The emergence of Covid-19 (represented in gold) caused a stagnation in this progress (and/or the reporting of it) but a sharp recovery has been observed from Q4 – 2020 onwards. The programme appears to be gaining momentum and delivering an increasing impact with time.



Key Programme Outcomes

Feedback from Community Groups regarding their experience of working with Renew Wales is consistently and overwhelmingly positive. Below are a small selection of representative comments:

Rydym yn ddiolchagr iawn o'r gefnogaeth a dderbyniwyd gan Adfywio Cymru. Roedd cyfarfod cychwynnol â'r Cydlynnydd o Adfywio Cymru yn fodd o ystyried a thrafod posibiliadau gwahanol a rydym yn gwerthfawrogi'r cyngor a dderbyniwyd wrth feddwl am y camau i'w cymryd a pha brosiect fyddai orau i ddatblygu.

Very thorough. Peter knows his stuff!

Without the help received we would not have been able to fulfil this project and hopefully we will be able to say that our Village Hall will be making a difference in the battle for climate change.

Margaret Minhinnick's assistance has been very valuable. She has given advice and support at all levels of our organisation. Her motivation and optimism and focus on action has been invaluable for group morale.

The Mentors have helped to drive forward what the young people would like to see at the centre.

We started to grow flowers, beans, spring onions etc. in the planters, which were so overgrown when the project first commenced.

If I am sent information about things we can take part in, I will act on them, so it's great to have someone sharing ideas with me.

We would not have gotten this funding bid approved, delivered the workshop on July 2nd, or had the opportunity to deliver a low carbon transport project across the region without Suzanne's support.

The support we have received has been fantastic. Sam has really imparted his skills and knowledge and has been brilliant at working with the staff and young people. There was a group of young people who never wanted to engage in any sort of activities when they came in here. They just wanted to sit around and go on their phones. But this project really got their attention.

The support we have received from Hugh and Delyth has really opened our eyes.

Stories and Experiences

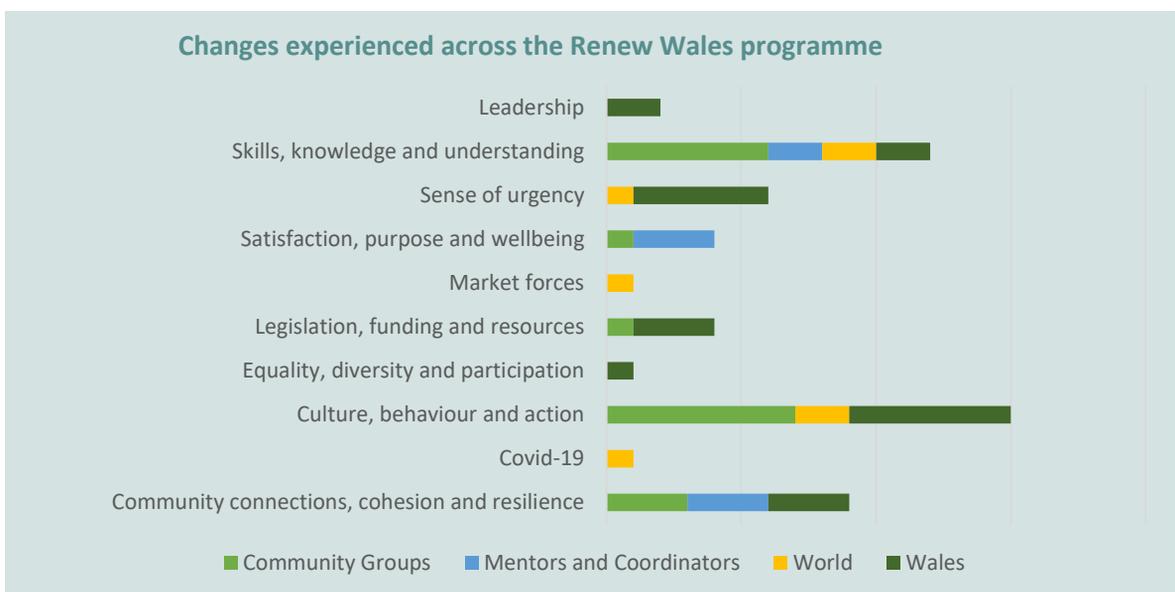
The Co-Design Project did not set out to challenge the outputs and outcomes detailed in Pages 3-6 above, or reported in Renew Wales previous progress reports and independent evaluations.

Rather, its focus was developing a deeper understanding of the context in, and process through which, outcomes were achieved, the factors enabling, and barriers inhibiting this, and identifying the ‘unknown unknowns’: those impacts which remain undetectable through current monitoring and reporting processes.

Firstly, through a series of 1:1 interviews with a select group of nine Mentors, Coordinators and Steering Group members with an intimate understanding of the programme, comments, reflections and stories were shared, connecting measured outcomes with first-hand experiences. Interviews focused on the changes individuals had observed and experienced at three levels:

1. Changes for the Community Groups they had supported.
2. Changes for themselves (for Mentors and Coordinators)
3. Changes for Wales and the World.

As detailed in the figure below, at all levels, these changes consistently fell into one of ten categories. They were inclusive of both those changes contributed to by the Renew Wales programme, and those external factors impacting upon the programme’s delivery. Most commonly, the changes reported were positive, and related to skills, knowledge and understanding, culture, behaviour and action, and community connections, cohesion and resilience. A detailed breakdown of those changes is provided across Pages 8 - 13.



Changes for Community Groups

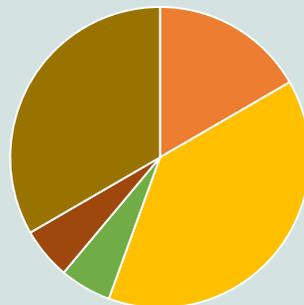
When reflecting on the changes brought about for Community Groups during their time with the Renew Wales programme, all comments shared by interviewees fell into one of five categories, as summarised below.

- **Culture, behaviour and action:** Interviewees experienced Community Groups taking action, and increasingly so, but only where a positive culture enabled that to happen. Action and culture they felt, can't be separated whilst working to enable change.
- **Skills, knowledge and understanding:** Interviewees have seen the skills, knowledge and understanding groups seek diversify, with local environmental objectives increasingly seen as interconnected with wider economic and social challenges, and the global climate agenda As such, signposting and partnership working are of increasing importance to the programme.
- **Community connections, cohesion and resilience:** Interviewees have seen groups grow closer, supporting each other, and becoming more resilient as result. However, this appears contingent on the culture, infrastructure and relationships between third, private and voluntary sectors in a given locality which enable such collaboration to sustain. Interviewees also cited the importance of bringing more diverse and representative voices into the conversation, something which they felt was not happening quickly enough.
- **Satisfaction, purpose and wellbeing:** Interviewees have seen those they support experience positive wellbeing as well as environmental impacts. They see the two as intrinsically connected, and as much about the process of working with Renew Wales as the outputs of this work.

External to Renew Wales' influence, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was cited as directly supporting and motivating groups (with respect to Renew Wales' mission), especially larger, more formally constituted groups.

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)

- Community connections, cohesion and resilience
- Culture, behaviour and action
- Legislation, funding and resources
- Satisfaction, purpose and wellbeing
- Skills, knowledge and understanding



Changes for Community Groups

The following are a selection of extracts from 1:1 interviews, with regards to changes brought about for Community Groups.

[Peer-to-peer support at the grass-roots level] is successful in Pembrokeshire. There are now over 100 groups in a population of only 200,000 - we're a 'group county'.

The level of impact we can have is contingent on the culture of the community group committees we work with. It can be hard to change that culture.

The main things is that people are linking up - it's great co-production - people are having an input into an overall vision and collaborating rather than going it alone.

The food surplus project I have supported has gone from strength to strength. Before, the model was not financially sustainable. Now, we are re-jigging the enterprise ... the project has learned to stand on its own two feet.

I supported a day services programme for people with disabilities. Before it was a place where people went to occupy their time. Now, they're focused on doing something positive, with an impact on their mental wellbeing, and project that build community resilience. There is huge cross-over between the environment and our mental health.

One group, largely of people in their 20's, were keen to do something ... through our conversations, it became clear that the group were deeply involved with movements like Black Lives Matter and XR, but disinterested in actions such as tree planting, or food growing. Renew Wales could have opened up significant opportunities to them, but they felt that the solutions to the challenges we face were global, not local.

Changes for the Team

Thanks to its peer-to-peer process, the Renew Wales team are part of its community. Therefore, understanding the changes experienced by the team is a key part of understanding the changes brought about for communities.

When reflecting on the changes they have experienced for themselves, all comments shared by interviewees fell into one of three categories, as summarised below:

- **Community connections, cohesion and resilience:** Through their roles with Renew Wales, interviewees felt more connected to one another. They have grown their networks, become embedded in their local community development ‘ecosystems’ and they feel increasingly empowered and equipped to help others.
- **Satisfaction, purpose and wellbeing:** Working with Renew Wales has provided interviewees with a sense of purpose and fulfilment. They have found the role both challenging and rewarding. Key to fulfilment, some commented, was the trust bestowed upon them, being permitting to ‘get on with it’ – building of their strengths and providing support as best they see fit.
- **Skills, knowledge and understanding:** Through their roles, interviewees reported gaining skills, knowledge and understanding which has fed back into their host organisations, their own work and their personal lives. They ‘learn from talking to people’ and see their behaviours and abilities improving as a result.

Reflecting on Renew Wales’ practitioner-led model itself, interviews reflected on the importance of maintaining a fresh, diverse and representative cohort, and saw Renew Wales practitioner-led approach as one to be proud of, and central to its ability to achieve an impact. All changes shared by the team were positive.

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)

- Community connections, cohesion and resilience
- Satisfaction, purpose and wellbeing
- Skills, knowledge and understanding



Changes for the Team

The following are a selection of extracts from 1:1 interviews, with regards to changes brought about for the team.

[Thanks to] that shift from training to community engagement, I'm now more part of the ecosystem.

It's through Renew Wales that I'm connected with individuals.

I'm very thankful to Renew Wales. I do something for them every day, it's very positive for me.

Making links between people is life affirming for those who've worked so hard on the ground.

I'm now much more focused on my own words and advice and analysing my own advice. I've learned so much from talking to other people. Finding answers for others also helps us with our own work.

[Thanks to Renew Wales] I'm consciously making more sustainable choices in my own life (for example, reducing my use of plastics as a consumer).

For my own health and wellbeing, I need to be involved in something which is taking things in the right direction.

Working with Renew Wales is enjoyable. It takes wide ranging experience to know what to focus on as a Mentor – it's hard to do.

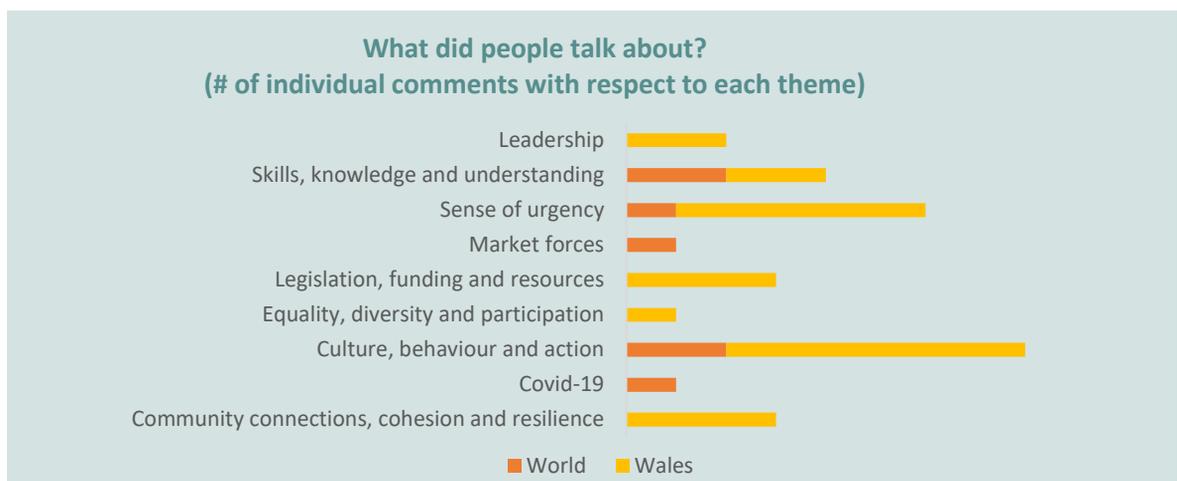
Through payment, Mentors have a stake and an incentive to find things out and let people know - pollinating ideas between groups.

Changes for Wales and the World

In supporting Community Groups across Wales to achieve local impacts, at scale wider impacts, contributed to by Renew Wales, should be observable across the nation. Furthermore, changes occurring at national and global scales, outside of Renew Wales' control, will directly influence the way in, and extent to, which it can carry out its mission. Interviewees reflected on changes touching upon wide ranging themes, as summarised below.

Across Wales, interviewees have experienced a growing sense of urgency amongst the Community Groups they have supported, coupled with a desire to take action, and an ability to do it. Increasingly they felt, people are accepting of the reality of climate change, and want to do something about it, and quickly. The potential for collaboration between groups, and with government, is perceived to be better than ever. Acknowledging that Renew Wales are only one of many contributors to this culture shift (and can only ever be part of the solution), the introduction of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the impact of campaigns and movements such as Extinction Rebellion, and the increasing role of the media and influencers in changing public perceptions of climate change are all identified by interviewees as having played a significant role.

Interviewees also felt that global shifts are impacting upon the ways in which Renew Wales can carry out its work, creating both challenges and opportunities. As within Wales, interviewees commented on the increased public profile of the climate debate, and increased awareness of the issues. We are seen to be 'at a transition point', moving from 'the awareness to the action stage'. Conversely, market forces (such as the falling price of oil) were identified as stifling progress, both at global and local scales. Covid-19 was widely acknowledged as having changed the way we all work, and accelerated a shift towards localism, with new ways of thinking about our work and lifestyle habits, though its longer-term impacts remain to be seen.



Changes for Wales and the World

The following are a selection of extracts from 1:1 interviews, with regards to changes for Wales and the world.

The environment has become front and centre in everyone's minds.

Renew Wales has gotten people talking in specific ways. Collectively Renew Wales is contributing to decision makers taking note - it's creating a ground swell.

Covid-19 accelerated things. It has provided a 'boost to localism', and local businesses have had to change their business models to deliver from home.

We're building resilience at the scale of Wales. We've less reliance on UK Government, and other things outside of our control. It would be great if there were similar things elsewhere

A negative change for the World has been the falling cost of oil.

The potential for partnership between government and communities is better now.

On climate change, we've won the argument – people accept it's one of the most important issues – we can't lay claim to that, but we've been part of the 'advanced party' supporting that transition.

Wales is now seen as a leader in environmental issues. There is a lot of eyes of Wales right now.

It feels as if we're at a transitional point. The conversation around soil repair, local food networks and so on has normalised in a way I haven't seen in 25 years

Young people are now more aware and are educating their elders.

Over time, the Renew Wales approach is becoming more prevalent – it's something we should be proud of.

Most Significant Changes

It is one thing to understand the changes a programme is bringing about (and how), but quite another to understand the significance of these changes.

When asked to reflect on the most significant changes they have experienced through their time with Renew Wales, interviewees most commonly talked about 'community connections, cohesion and resilience'. The ability to build 'grass-roots connectivity', and encourage sharing, collaboration and community resilience was seen by many interviewees as the essence of the programme's value proposition, and the fundamental which enables all of the programme's wider impacts.

When asked (through a 'story selection workshop' – see Book 1) to reflect on which of all the changes shared by interviewees was most significant to them, the Renew Wales Central Team selected the following comment:

“I supported a day services programme for people with disabilities. Before it was a place where people went to occupy their time. Now, they're focused on doing something positive, with an impact on their mental wellbeing, and project that build community resilience. There is huge cross-over between the environment and our mental health.”

For them, this underlined the programme's ability to change people's lives in a meaningful way, demonstrated how short-term outcomes can deliver long-term impacts, and the way in which environmental issues are connected with all others: requiring joined-up thinking and holistic solutions.

When reflecting (through a 'Community of Enquiry' - see Book 1), on all the changes delivered by the Renew Wales programme, and the significant lessons these changes can offer us for the future, Renew Wales Coordinators, Mentors and Steering Group members came together, and drew the following broad conclusions:

1. That change must happen faster, at all levels, and at all scales.
2. That lasting and sustainable change can only happen through collaboration, partnership and involvement in all directions – with citizens, businesses, Community Groups, local and national government all playing their part.
3. That asset-based approaches and positive narratives are essential – celebrating success and building on what works.
4. That there is a huge amount of knowledge and experience across Wales which must be captured, consolidated and shared.
5. That we must take advantage of existing power and opportunity we have.

Most Significant Changes

The following are a selection of comments from the Story Selection workshop and Community of Enquiry:

It is unusual for us to work with those who don't think on a local scale. We assume that those we work with believe the actions they are taking on a local scale to be significant.

We look at things more holistically, and this is key.

It's significant that there is such a movement as XR now - that a lot of people, young and old, are engaged with.

Renew Wales allows people to connect into the 'ecosystem of change at the community level.

A limit to how much action is currently happening on these issues is not just understanding the issues, it's making a way to tackle the issues viable within the current system we have.

Awareness of climate change has changed since 2012. We're not starting from the same level that we were before.

We should be co-producing. None of us can do it on our own - Government, individuals or otherwise.

Trying to create cultural change within organisations is very hard. They are often interested in tokenistic activities

If people had a common sense of themselves as an interconnected part of the ecosystems that we depend on, would actions at every level come into 'ecological integrity', meeting the challenge of climate change?

There is a big gap between mental acceptance (of climate change) and a readiness to do something - any programme must bring these two things together.

All power ultimately comes from citizens, and if we can do something to unleash citizen power, governments can get on with serving citizens' interests

Significant Questions

Since its inception in 2012, Renew Wales has consistently met its targets, and delivered considerable and measurable progress with respect to its key performance indicators and intended outcomes. However, the Co-Design Project was not, primarily, about this. It was about how reflecting on past experiences could help to inform present activities and prepare for future challenges and opportunities.

Since Renew Wales was conceived, Wales, and the world, have changed drastically. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has been introduced. The world has suffered a pandemic. The climate emergency has found an increasingly prominent role in the media, and public acceptance of the crisis has grown. Global commitments to tackle climate change have been made in Paris (COP21), and Glasgow (COP26). The effects of climate change are being observed across the planet and people are increasingly ready to take action. As such, irrespective of the impacts achieved by the delivery of the programme in the past, new solutions are now needed, to meet the needs of this new world.

Building upon the rich sources of data, extensive reflections and broad conclusions summarized in the pages above, in February 2021, Renew Wales' Coordinators, Mentors and wider stakeholders were invited to participate in an 'Open Forum', and co-define the questions which were the basis of a period of experimentation and exploration with communities across Wales in the months that followed, as focus shifted towards the future. Five such questions were defined:

- 1. How can those who never talk about climate change be brought into the conversation?**
- 2. How can informal community-led meets-ups make a positive contribution to our environmental challenges?**
- 3. 'How can the 'Climate Emergency' translate into meaningful action at the micro-local level?'**
- 4. How can Community Groups most effectively access the skills, knowledge and understanding they need in order to take action?**
- 5. How can younger people be inspired to get involved in grassroots, community-led environmental action?**

These questions were not intended as an exhaustive list, but as a valid set of relevant and timely questions, around which achievable goals could be set, and meaningful progress made with limited time and resources. They underpinned the 'Reaching Out' phase of the Co-Design Project, the outcomes of which are detailed in Book 3 of this report.

Prepared for Renew Wales by
The Co-production Network for Wales



Rhwydwaith
Cydgynhyrchu
Cymru

Co-production
Network
for Wales



Book 3 of 3

Now What?

Looking to the future



The Co-Design Project

Final Report

November 2021

Introduction

In Book 3 of this report, we ask ‘now what?’, and building upon all that was learned through the Co-Design Project, consider the ways in which Renew Wales’ mission can best be carried forward.

The future is uncertain, and working in complexity means that no amount of theorising, data gathering and analysis can pave the way forward with an absolute degree of certainty.

Therefore, in looking ahead, the Co-Design Project focused on learning through doing: experimenting, taking risks, and having new conversations, with new people, in new ways. Events and innovations brought together Renew Wales Mentors, Coordinators, Central Team and Steering Group, alongside those they’ve worked with closely many times before, through to those who are completely new to the programme. This experience provided rich food for thought: some things worked and some didn’t, some things were expected, and others a total surprise. No matter what, new insights were generated, relationships built, and opportunities uncovered, along the way.

The process was as an iterative one. The experience of doing new things, and reflecting on them, enabled new and better questions to be formulated, and new ways to explore those questions to be proposed, through a continuous ‘plan, do, review’ cycle.

In the following pages we detail:

- The experience of delivering each of the Co-Design Project’s events: what we did and what we learned.
- The insights, new questions and new opportunities these experiences generated.
- The vision and aspirations of the Renew Wales team for the decade ahead.
- The immediate next steps which may help to get there.

In Book 1 of this Final Report, we detailed the ‘Co-Design’ process implemented throughout the ‘Co-Design Project’. In Book 2, we assessed what this process had revealed about Renew Wales past and present impact, contextualising these reflections on the future.

The Co-Design Project was led, and this Final Report produced by, the Co-production Network for Wales. As a participatory, developmental project, learning was generated, and embedded, through the project’s delivery, captured through a diverse range of outputs (an archive of which accompanies this Final Report). This Final Report does not replace the learning captured elsewhere but provides an overarching account of how the diverse elements of the project came together, and the ‘mission-wide’ conclusions which can be drawn as a result of it.

Reaching Out

Building on the Open Forum undertaken in February 2021, where five ‘significant questions’ were co-defined (see Book 2), Phase 2 of the Co-Design Project (‘Reaching Out’) commenced with a series of ‘event planning sessions’ where each of these questions was translated into a brief for an exploratory event.

Event planning sessions were open to all Renew Wales’ Central Team members, Coordinators, Mentors and previously supported Community Groups to attend. In total, 33 individuals participated in the series of five events.

Planning sessions considered not only type of events which may be desirable, but the practical considerations required to deliver them, including:

- **Who:** their desired participants and target audiences.
- **What:** their structures and contents.
- **When:** Their optimal duration, time and date for delivery.
- **Where:** Their optimal delivery mode, and location.
- **Why:** Their central purpose, and value proposition to their audience.

Across all sessions, four principles guided deliberations:

1. That across all events, diversity (of who, what, when and why) should be ensured, to optimize the potential learning that could be generated.
2. That each event must have its own ‘self contained value proposition’ – that is, audiences must have the potential to benefit from their participation irrespective of what followed in the future.
3. That each event was of a scale and ambition allowing it to be delivered to a high standard with the limited time and resources available.
4. That, where possible, events should directly or indirectly encourage participants to ‘get their hands dirty’ and connect with nature.

The event planning sessions led to the co-creation of five event briefs, with preparations for the delivery of each event following accordingly. Preparations were led by the Co-production Network for Wales team, with Renew Wales Mentors and Coordinators providing guidance, advice and voluntary assistance as required.

The development of a Renew Wales podcast series was also supported by the Co-production Network for Wales at this time, and considered a de facto sixth event, in virtue of its strong alignment with the objectives of the ‘Reaching Out’ phase of the Co-Design Project. A total of five podcast episodes were produced as part of this work.

Across pages 4-9 of this report, we detail the experience of delivering each of these events.

Reaching Out: The Takeover

The Takeover was a response to the question, 'How can those who never talk about climate change be brought into the conversation?'

What we did

Many of those who stand to gain the most from Renew Wales' work would not self-identify as needing it. To address this, the 'Takeover' explored what Renew Wales would look like 'on tour': with the expertise of Mentors and Coordinators taken to groups who may never reach out for help, but who nonetheless may significantly benefit from it. On June 9th 2021, aligned with World Environment Day, Renew Wales partnered with TownSq (a B-Corp who support the development of businesses, people, places and communities across the UK) and participated in an interactive conversation with freelancers and start-up entrepreneurs entitled 'How small business owners can help to save the planet'.

What we learned

The lively hour-long conversation, delivered online, revealed that:

- For those who had not joined a conversation about the environment before, the opportunity to meet on 'safe ground', amongst peers, and where they were familiar, was key to breaking the habit.
- People weren't short of things to say, even if they'd never said them before. One participant described the presence of Renew Wales as 'validating', providing the context, and permission to talk about environmental issues.
- Freelancers and start-up entrepreneurs saw the challenges and opportunities they face with respect to the climate emergency as directly connected to many others: political systems, organisational cultures, business rates, financial support, communication, education and much else in between. There was no problem that could be solved (and no opportunity that could be taken) in isolation.
- A first conversation can light a touch paper. The event did not draw firm conclusions, but helped its participants to build confidence, explore ideas, ask better questions, and develop an appetite to keep the conversation going.

In a post-event survey, 83% of respondents rated their experience as '5 out of 5' with a strong desire to participate in similar events in the future. Building on the Takeover, on November 2021, TownSq ran a UK-wide event entitled 'Make Sustainable More Obtainable', to which all of their members were invited.

I'm going to keep my eco mindset and drive the message to the community and people I work with by taking those small, easy steps to be more green!

Reaching Out: The Speed Date

The Speed Date was a response to the question ‘How can informal community-led meets-ups make a positive contribution to our environmental challenges?’.

What we did

Taking place over a lunchtime, virtually, on the 16th June 2021, the event, entitled ‘All in this Together’ welcomed anyone with an interest in the environment to join a ‘speed networking session’: moving between groups of like-minded individuals, and letting the conversation go wherever it wanted to.

Promoted via Renew Wales’ existing networks, in addition to select invitations to representatives of programmes leading similar initiatives in other parts of the world, in total, 18 individuals participated in the event, from across Wales and from as far afield as Kenya and Nepal.

What we learned

When surveyed after the event 50% of respondents stated that they had made 1 to 5 new connections as a result of their participation, and 33% stated that they had made 5-10. When asked what they felt were the most valuable aspects of their experience, responses included:

- ‘Meeting new people and working together for the good of the community.’
- ‘Meeting people I otherwise wouldn't have had the chance to.’
- ‘Hearing what others are doing to help our planet.’

When asked what they would go on to do as a result of their participation, responses included:

- ‘Linking up with other organisations wanting to run a repair café’
- ‘Contacting those connections [I have made] and seeing if there's scope to work together.’
- ‘Making a project out of the connections [I made] to make the world a better place.’

Whether speaking with their local neighbours, or individuals from the other side of the world, people had much in common, much to learn from one another, and a desire to stay connected. An interactive ‘Padlet’ map (as shown in the figure), allowed participants to share their contact details, and continue their conversations after the event’s completion.



Reaching Out: The Bring and Buy Sale

The Bring and Buy sale was a response to the question 'How can the Climate Emergency translate into meaningful action at the micro-local level?'

What we did

Taking place on the 23rd June, the event took the form of a Circle of Reciprocity: where a group of individuals comes together, asking for solutions to the challenges they are facing, and offering solutions where they can to the challenges encountered by others. The process is not only about pairing challenges and solutions but also building relationships and commitment between those all those individuals who participate.

Invitations to participate were issued to representatives of all those town, parish and community councils across the UK who had made 'Climate Emergency Declarations'. Conducted online, whilst the event was fully subscribed with 20 registered attendees, only 7 individuals ultimately attended.

What we learned

Whilst attendance was low, participants ranged from Town Mayors to Mayors to Community Development Officers, from all parts of the UK.

The event's key finding was that, for those working in Town and Community Councils, overcoming environmental challenges requires much more than environmental expertise. The specific challenges individuals sought help in overcoming fell into 3 categories:

- **Paperwork:** Navigating the bureaucracy of local government was described as one participant as 'like swimming through porridge'). The amount of paperwork required to implement seemingly simple changes, was seen as a significant barrier to progress.
- **Communication:** Securing the commitment of fellow councillors, citizens and other partners to take action was seen as a persistent challenge, and one requiring more regular and more effective communication.
- **Coordination:** A disconnect between action at local, regional and national levels was seen as a key barrier to progress. There was a strong desire for more alignment, and opportunities to connect.

Whilst solutions to each challenge weren't found amongst the small group, participants reported that 'it was inspiring to know that they weren't on their own' that the event 'built foundations for the future' and that conversations like this 'must continue'.

Reaching Out: The Celebration

The Celebration was a response to the question ‘How can younger people be inspired to get involved in grassroots, community-led environmental action?’

What we did?

At the outset, the aim of the ‘Celebration’ was to shine a spotlight on the good work being done to combat the climate emergency by young people across Wales, and to create opportunities for today’s decision-makers to participate in events led by young people, on their own terms and with them setting the agenda.

What transpired was that Renew Wales were not alone in this ambition, and ultimately the Celebration transformed into a partnership, working alongside Wrexham Glyndwr University, Natural Resources Wales and GwE (the school improvement service for North Wales). The partnership delivered TEDxGWE, where on 1st November 2021 groups of school students from across North Wales came together at Theatr Clwyd to present their visions for the future to an audience of politicians, educators and influencers from across the region - coinciding with COP26. Renew Wales’ primary role in the partnership was to provide the young people taking part with resource packs, equipping them to get their message across, and offering Mentoring support to schools to help translate their students’ visions into meaningful action. In total, over 100 young people took part.

What we learned

The event provided insight into the novel and unexpected ways in which Renew Wales’ aims and ambitions can be realized, through:

- **New partnerships:** Renew Wales had not worked with these partners previously. Asking a new question, led to conversations, and opportunities, with those who were new to the organisation, but who shared a common agenda.
- **New products:** The development of ‘Resource Packs’ is not part of Renew Wales’ core service but provided a simple way for the broad skills and knowledge of the extended team to be easily translated into a product of great value.

In both of the above, key was not being wedded to any one process or way of working. An open-mind, and freedom to focus exclusively on doing what was needed to contribute to shared goals, enabled all that followed.

The resources packs were brilliant and will be really helpful moving forward, we cannot thank you enough the event was a great success and it was an inspiring and uplifting event that importantly the children and young people really loved!

Reaching Out: The Hack

The Hack was a response to the question 'How can Community Groups most effectively access the skills, knowledge and understanding they need in order to take action?'

What we did

A hack typically involves a group of individuals with diverse skills and experiences, coming together for a set time, to develop a solution to a given challenge. This hack, entitled, 'The Environment and Me' and taking place on 25th June 2021, was a partnership between Renew Wales and Cwm Taf People First, a member led self-advocacy organisation for people with a learning disability. The challenge was to create a range of accessible resources that could act as conversation starters in developing future narrative with people with a learning disability about how they can help combat climate change and live more sustainably. Bringing together Renew Wales Mentors, creative professionals and those with lived experience of learning disabilities, over four hours, four teams each co-created a new set of resources.

What we learned

Whilst a valuable and enjoyable experience in and of itself for all involved, and a demonstration of how quickly new resources can be created in the right conditions, the event went on to have an unexpected wider impact on the People First's work. Following the hack:

- Cwm Taf People First are now using the hack model to influence other areas of their work: including health inequalities, transport issues, work and employment and housing.
- A supported living provider contacted People First as their tenants (people with a learning disability) were being threatened with fines as they were not separating and recycling their waste properly due to a lack of understanding and clear (Easy Read) guidance. Building on the creative approaches employed in the hack, Easy read posters with illustrations and pictures we co-produced with tenants, helping them to recycle.
- An access group was established to evaluate the accessibility of local outdoor/green spaces across South East Wales, working with local authorities to improve access.
- People First launched their own programme, 'Stepping Out', to get people with a learning disability engaging with their local outdoor/green spaces, through a range of co-design and co-production approaches. The programme has gone on to secure significant funding to be rolled out across South East Wales.

This serves as another reminder of the 'snowball effect' that can emerge from a simple, but meaningful, intervention.

Reaching Out: The Podcast

The Renew Wales podcast series, 'Renew Wales in Conversation' whilst not a direct response to a question, was a natural opportunity to build on a desire to create podcasts from the Renew Wales team, and to have new conversations, with new people, in a new way.

What we did

A series of five podcasts were created through May, June and July 2021. The intention with each was to capture natural and informal conversations between passionate individuals talking about the things they care about. The potential benefits were seen as two fold:

1. Bringing the work of Renew Wales (and the work of Community Groups across Wales) to new audiences (of podcast listeners).
2. Bring like-minded people together, to share knowledge, experience and forge new partnerships (for podcast contributors).

Each podcast featured one Renew Wales Mentor, one representative of a Community Group Supported by Renew Wales, and one representative of a group completely new to the programme – from anywhere in the world. The series was released (via YouTube) in the summer of 2021 and promoted the Renew Wales website and social media channels.

What we learned

The following comments are taken from a blog post authored by Renew Wales Communications Officer Delyth Higgins, who coordinated the series' production:

There's been a relaxed and friendly atmosphere while recording which has been great and we hope this has come across to listeners. We also hope that many have been inspired to act or have learnt something or have been provoked into thinking more deeply about something.

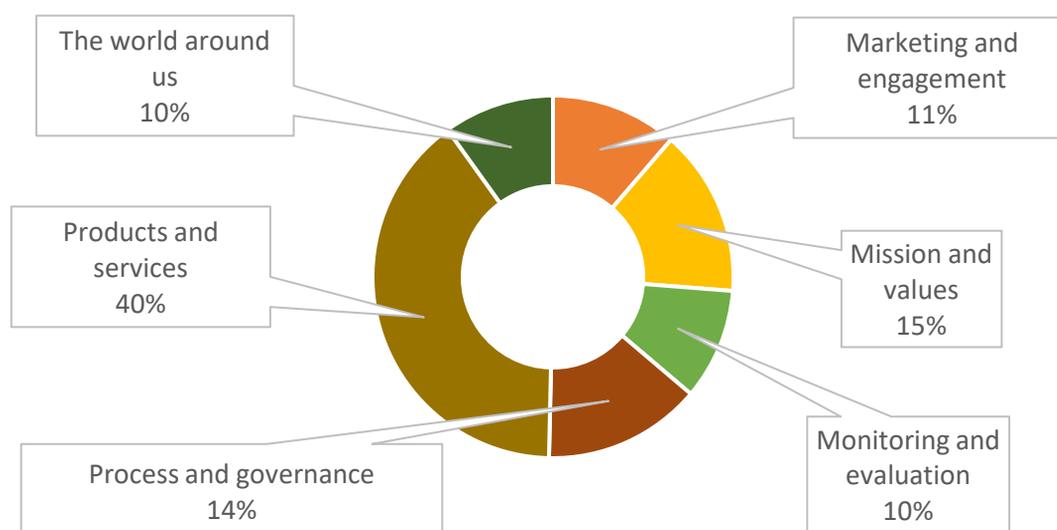
Plenty of learning has taken place behind the scenes too - in terms of the recording and production itself but also improved knowledge and the experience of using various graphic packages to create visual representational, cover art and promotional products for the podcasts.

...I for one, very much hope we can continue to record new and exciting podcasts in the future as a means of inspiring more action on climate change and reaching new and different audiences.

Sense Making

The experience of co-designing, preparing and delivering each event, generated new insights, new questions and new opportunities.

In August 2021, a series of weekly 'sense making sessions' saw a small voluntary group of Renew Wales' Central Team members, Mentors and Coordinators come together, and consider the implications of what the events had revealed, for what should happen next. Over the course of the sessions, 141 unique comments and contributions regarding how Renew Wales' mission could best be carried forward were shared. These consistently fell into one of six themes, as displayed in the figure below.



With regards to 'the world around us', sense making participants saw both emergent challenges and opportunities, outside of the direct control of any one programme or organisation, but which any future programme would have to be mindful of:

- Discussion of challenges focused on the continued disconnect between citizens, communities and those who ultimately hold power, and the continued (and growing) complexity of the climate emergency.
- Discussion of opportunities focused on the increasing awareness of the climate emergency, and readiness for action, around Wales and the world.

All other discussions were concerned with those actions directly under the control of a programme or organisation and are summarized in pages 11-15 below.

Theme 1: Marketing and Engagement

Any programme carrying Renew Wales' mission forward into the future, must clearly communicate its value, celebrate and promote its success, and engage with communities and organisations at all levels, representative of the country's rich diversity.

Audience development

Whilst acknowledging the wide-range of org-anisations Renew Wales has supported in the past decade, sense making participants felt that in the future, more needed to be done to reach the 'unusual suspects'. In particular, there was seen to be significant scope to engage with young people, Welsh speakers, and those who would not self-identify as being able to take action to combat climate change, working across sectors and becoming more representative of Wales' diversity. The importance of being pro-active was noted, reaching out to build new audiences.

Public perceptions

Participants felt the lines between being mentors, peers, experts, facilitators and business coaches were no longer clear – with value to be added in re-establishing the essence of the approach.

Brand and Language

Participants felt messages must become simpler to reach wider, and that there should be greater confidence in celebrating progress and success.

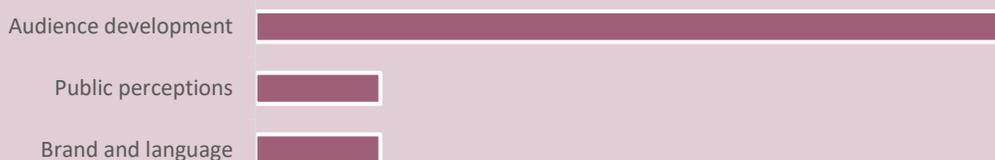
We haven't done enough to engage with the unusual suspects.

There is more scope to do things in the Welsh language.

We can be perceived as experts, but in practice we are closer to Mentors and business coaches

We should do more to promote ourselves and celebrate our success

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)



Theme 2: Mission and Values

Any programme carrying Renew Wales’ mission forward into the future, must have a clearly defined vision, mission and value proposition, commensurate to the changing needs of the planet, and responsive to the evolving wants and needs of communities and organisations.

Value proposition

Sense making participants felt that, whilst different community group and organisations may have a different route into engaging with a programme like Renew Wales, its value proposition is fundamentally connected to its process – about empowerment, co-production, and ‘creating your own thing’ – to enable long-term sustainable solutions.

Values

Participants said that ‘being community-led’ must remain central to any future programme, and noted the strong alignment between the values of Renew Wales and the ‘5 ways of working’ of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the possibilities this presents for the future.

Purpose

Participants felt that as the climate emergency becomes increasingly critical, any programme which exists to address it should likewise act with an appropriate sense of that urgency.

If you’re going to call it a climate emergency, treat it like an emergency.

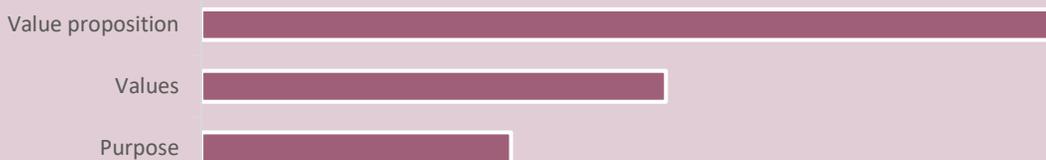
Empowerment is central to our work.

Saving money used to be the main driver ... now it’s saving the environment.

The experience of ‘creating your own thing’ is where the value is.

It’s about ripples at a community level

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)



Theme 3: Monitoring and Evaluation

Any programme carrying Renew Wales’ mission forward into the future, must set goals, and measure progress towards them, in a way which reflects the nuance of enabling sustainable change. It must capture the ‘unknown unknowns’ and encourage a culture of learning and innovation.

Evaluation

Sense making participants felt that in the future, evaluation approaches capture unexpected and intended outcomes of work, focus on the long-term and indirect impacts of interventions (i.e. what happens next, once direct support for a group comes to an end), and do more to reveal the impact of ‘how things are done’ not only ‘what things are done’.

Monitoring

Participants felt that key performance indicators should be treated with caution, noting that ‘when something becomes an indicator it can cease to be a reliable measure.’ Monitoring measures they felt, should be as much about encourage the right kinds of approaches and experiences, as assessing the outcomes of those approaches and experiences.

Success criteria

Participants felt that a programme’s success could never be measured with numbers alone. There needed to be a greater trust that ‘the right things happen for the people who happen to be there’.

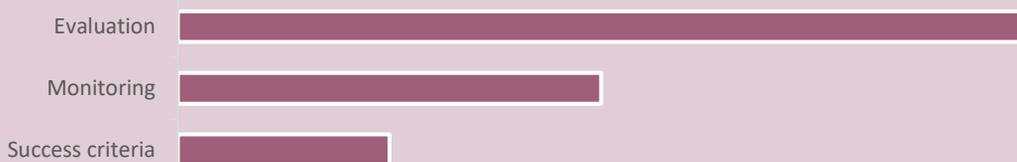
We need to attach value not only to the outcomes of conversations, but conversations themselves.

We need a shift back to a focus on outcomes over outputs.

The impacts of our work are long term, and we need an approach to monitoring and evaluation that reflects that.

We should adapt our targets to meet our impacts – not the other way around!

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)



Theme 4: Process and Governance

Any programme carrying Renew Wales’ mission forward into the future, must have governance structures suited to working in complexity, processes which are flexible and responsive to emergent challenges and opportunities, and ultimately be citizen-led if it is to remain an authentic voice of communities.

Partners

Sense making participants saw working in partnership as an essential element of any future programme. This partnership they felt, should include all sectors, and range from grass-roots organisations to Governments, if a holistic approach and lasting change is to be achieved.

Systems

Whilst acknowledging that the model Renew Wales operates now have proven effective, participants felt any future programme would require a greater degree of flexibility and adaptability in order to be more responsive to the changing and emerging needs to communities, especially as the potential audience for such a programme grows.

Structures

Complexity theory was seen by participants as providing a framework for a new way of working. Working effectively in complexity it was felt, requires not only new structures, but a new culture, conducive to embrace change and uncertainty.

Doing anything in a citizen-led way is challenging under time pressure.

We need a culture shift towards a model better suited to working in complexity.

There is importance in partnership and thinking holistically

We need greater flexibility.

The model Renew Wales has it a good one, it has been effective



Theme 5: Products and Services

Any programme carrying Renew Wales’ mission forward into the future must innovate with its products, services and support, remaining relevant and responsive, growing its prospective audience and utilising the assets which have been accumulated over the past decade.

New products and services

Sense making participants saw a huge number of opportunities to develop new products and services, to meet the emerging and changing needs of communities. Across all, greater flexibility and a move away from ‘a linear process’ was desired. It was noted that there is future potential beyond the borders of Wales, with approaches fostered in the country serving exemplars to others.

Existing products and services

It was noted that existing products and services still work and still deliver a positive impact, especially where ‘time and space’ are provided for groups to develop their thoughts, learn and absorb information. Participants felt mentors were now providing a much wider range of support through existing products and services than they used to.

Intellectual property

Participants saw the inherent value in the extensive networks and rich knowledge possessed by Renew Wales – something as yet underutilised in the programme’s delivery.

Our Mentors provide a much wider range of support than we used to.

There is a need for strong networks of mutual support.

We now possess a huge data bank of information.

Takeovers are cheap, easy and impactful - something we could do more of.

The programme is coming into its own, and it now more in demand than ever!

What did people talk about?
(# of individual comments with respect to each theme)



A 10-Year Vision

On September 23rd, the Team Gathering brought together 22 Renew Wales Coordinators, Steering Group members and Central Team members. Presented with and discussing the ‘sense making’ conclusions detailed in the pages above, they went on to consider “what they would like to see, if we were all to re-convene 10 years from now?”. The following are a selection of their comments:

Stronger local economies.

More cohesion amongst communities.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 becoming a requirement for all organisations, across all sectors, and the ethos of the act being reflected in legislation across the UK and around the world.

Work happening in partnership, and at scale, to change systems.

The climate emergency being less critical than it is today.

The co-creation of new communication channels, allowing communities to take action in close collaboration with those in power.

Solutions being implemented on the ground (for example, renewable energy) with maximum community benefit.

Asset transfer simplified, and the barriers to community ownership removed.

If Renew Wales still exists in 10 years, then we haven't achieved what we need to achieve.

People believing that that it is possible to tackle climate change successfully.

Everyone, at all levels, treating the climate emergency like an emergency.

In the above, the challenge of planning ‘even 6 months ahead, let alone 10 years’ was noted, as was the potential impact of COP26 (which this conversation took place prior to) on shifting perspectives and agendas.

Next Steps

This is a Final Report, but not a final word.

As documented and summarised throughout the three books of this report, insights were gathered, conclusions were drawn, and learning was embedded, throughout the Co-Design Project's full duration. This ranged from identifying the small details that can enhance specific services and activities, through to establishing a vision and thematic areas of focus for any programme advancing Renew Wales' mission in the decade ahead.

Working in complexity, any future-facing conclusions presented as absolutes should be treated with caution. The world will continue to change, and plans and actions will need to evolve accordingly. What is critical however, is that such conclusions are utilised as a spring board, that momentum is carried forward, and that learning and developing never stops.

Renew Wales are already doing this. Following the completion of the Co-Design Project, 'Innovation Initiatives' are now continuing to encourage an exploration of new ways of doing things, and 'sense making sessions' are continuing to harvest the learning generated through these endeavours.

All that has been learned will directly inform the big questions which lie ahead for Renew Wales. Questions regarding:

- **Its status, constitution and business model:** does the programme have an end, does it continue in its current form indefinitely, does it transition to become an independent organisation, or is it superseded by an entirely new programme or suite of programmes?
- **Its products, services and activities:** does the programme change its delivery model, does it evolve new products and services, and does it provide those products and services to new audiences, on new terms?
- **Its vision, mission and purpose:** does the programme's vision and mission still motivate the change it originally intended to, is its work still true to its values, and does it remain a relevant and prominent force for good in Wales and beyond?

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions above. In keeping with the values and approach of the Co-Design Project, we would recommend that such questions are explored through continued, open and exploratory dialogue, where decisions are reached with, and owned by, all those whom they will impact upon.

END OF REPORT

Prepared for Renew Wales by
The Co-production Network for Wales



Rhwydwaith
Cydgynhyrchu
Cymru

Co-production
Network
for Wales